

From Faith to Faith

Granbury Street Church of Christ

The Road to Captivity

Kevin W. Rhodes

The history of ancient Israel, recorded throughout the pages of the Old Testament, began with amazing promise and grand deliverance only to head quite regularly toward disappointment and despair. Despite the brief period of strength and faith under David and, to a lesser extent, Solomon, the division of Israel produced two weak political entities with even weaker faith. The northern kingdom quickly accepted idolatry under Jeroboam and Baal worship under Ahab before Assyria ended their political existence. Judah's pendulum of faith swung wildly back and forth depending on the king but essentially spiralling downward until Manasseh's wickedness assured the end of God's patience with the southern kingdom as well, though offered a brief reprieve under Josiah. However, following the death of that good king, everything began falling apart in Judah. Pharaoh Necho imprisoned Jehoahaz, imposing tribute on Judah, and put Eliakim on the throne as a puppet king he called Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:31-37). After Nebuchadnezzar fought Egypt, he made Jehoiakim his own vassal. Despite his rebellion three years later, raiders ensured that Babylon would control Judah (2 Kings 24:1-7). Shortly after his son, Jehoiachin, came to power at the tender age of eighteen, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:8-12). Following their quick victory, the Babylonians took everything of value from the temple and the palace as spoils of war, took Jehoiachin, the wealthy, the warriors, and the educated captive to Babylon (2 Kings 24:13-16). Then Nebuchadnezzar set up Mattaniah as a puppet king, calling him Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:17-20).

This brief history of the final descent of Judah into captivity well illustrates the path taken by many spiritually as well. Despite all the blessings available to the faithful, some congregations, through the influence of the false religion around them, vacillate doctrinally for years before ultimately choosing error and justifying immorality. They reject the efforts of some to pull them back from the abyss and instead pay tribute to the prince of the power of the air. For some time they maintain the illusion of their previous identity, but they have fallen under the control of far different leadership. Eventually, the greater worldly forces prevail and remove even the pretense of their identifying themselves with God. The people then go into spiritual captivity, absorbed into the culture of the world at large. Some among them may still maintain a glimmer of their former relationship with God, but for most of them, Babylon seems much like home. Even then only a remnant sought God, waited patiently, and finally enjoyed the privilege of returning home, but it took the hard pruning process of captivity—and so, it seems, it will also today.

Shepherds

Sid Carruth
Kenneth Helm
Clark Lehtinen
George Sowell

Deacons

Gary Barger
Jeff Day
Vince Grinnell
Justin Hewlett
Bill Hughes
Tim Norman

Preacher

Kevin Rhodes

Sunday

Bible Study
9:00 am

AM Worship
10:00 am

PM Worship
5:00 pm

Wednesday

Ladies Class
10:00 am

Bible Study
7:00 pm

Cleburne, Texas

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Obedience Listens Carefully - Part Two

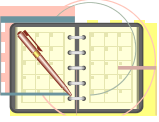
Kevin W. Rhodes

The role of a disciple begins with a recognition of personal ignorance. Therefore, true disciples listen to learn—not to argue. Far too many people today approach Jesus and the New Testament with preconceived ideas of what discipleship and Christianity require. As a result, they come to Jesus not to listen but to argue. They approach him with their own ideas, expecting Him to accept their doctrine and old life rather than coming to Him to learn what they must do to enjoy a new life. Unfortunately, many of those claiming Jesus as Lord will one day be forced to admit to Him, “I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me!” (Prov. 5:13). The proof of learning to listen lies in the response that shows not only knowledge of the message but also submission to the message. As Zephaniah described Judah, “She has not obeyed His voice, She has not received correction; She has not trusted in the LORD, She has not drawn near to her God” (Zeph. 3:2).

Disciples of Jesus Christ listen carefully to **all** that He has to say. You simply cannot lay claim to following Christ if you only listen to and accept part of His message. Joshua’s commendation came not for listening somewhat to divine instruction but in fulfilling it all: “You have kept **all** that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in **all** that I com-

manded you” (Josh. 22:2, emp. mine, KWR). Years later, on the other hand, Judah still kept up some semblance of temple worship in accordance with the law, “But they did not obey nor incline their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear nor receive instruction” (Jer. 17:23). Thus, the Old Testament provides examples both of people listening to everything God says and of people doing quite the opposite. The problem for disciples lies in thinking we are listening like Joshua while ignoring times we listen like Judah. Listening for commendation takes little effort; listening for admonition and correction takes dedication.

More than that, disciples must develop a heart that seeks truth and salvation instead of seeking ease and validation. Disciples do not try to get their own way; they devote themselves to living life God’s way. The difference between these is the difference between eternal life and eternal damnation (Rom. 2:6-8). God does not only expect disciples to accept truth and speak truth; He also expects disciples to live truth. As the Jews discovered, following the LORD requires matching His expectations with our actions (Jer. 7:23-28). Thus, since truth determines the difference between life and death, between following Christ and just pretending, between faithful and faithless, seeking all truth must become the core of a disciple’s spiritual heart.



News and Notes

Among our sick

- Ken Boroughs saw the specialist on Wednesday at Huguley.
- Charlotte Freese's surgery on her left knee will be November 19th at Hunt Regional Hospital in Greenville. She will have surgery on her right knee three months later.
- Dorothy Harrell has been moved to Pecan Manor Nursing and Rehab Center; 413 E. Mansfield Cardinal, Room #1-B; Kennedale, TX 76060 817-561-4495 (Facility phone).
- James Henslee will have cataract surgery on Monday, November 4th, in Fort Worth.
- Helen Henslee will have back surgery Wednesday, November 6th, at North Texas Methodist Hospital.
- Jack Hewlett had some problems with his heart racing Sunday evening. If you do visit him, please keep your visits very short for Jack's sake.
- Janice Redden has been diagnosed with a condition that is affecting the left side of her brain and her speech. It will progressively worsen. Please pray for her and be patient when talking to her. She is very concerned about the outcome.
- Ruth Wilson's daughter Jessie, who lives in Idaho, is in the process of making arrangements to have one of her eyes removed. This is a problem she has been having for some time.
- Weldon York had surgery on his heart on Tuesday.

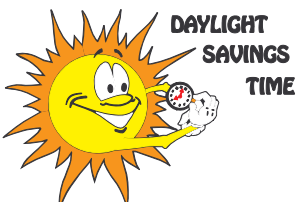


Baby Shower

The ladies are invited to a baby shower honoring Dana Owens Stucky on Sunday, November 10th, from 1:30—3:00 in the annex. She is registered at Target. The baby is a girl.

Please Note

- Wednesday, October 30th, we will have singing in the annex. There will be no classes.
- 7th—high school youth devotional will be Sunday, November 3rd, after the evening worship at the Norman's home. Girls bring desserts. Guys bring chips.
- The next Bible Search training will take place on Sunday, November 3rd. Training for song leading, public speaking, and oral Bible reading will begin at 3:30 PM. All event logs related to Bible Search are due to Russ by November 4th. See Russ or Ryan for any questions.



Daylight savings ends this Sunday, November 3rd. Don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour before you go to bed Saturday night.

Those who Serve

Lords' Supper: 11/3

Front South

J. D. Allen
Colton Allen
Dale Ash

Front North

Ken Boroughs
Will Cammack
Sid Carruth

Back South

Larry Thompson
Gene Threadgill
Ricky Threadgill

Back North

Weldon York
Gary Barger
Steve Baze

Leading prayers:

Sunday AM

Perry Elkins
Don Crecelius

Sunday PM

Tim Norman
Caleb Norman
Colton Allen

Wednesday PM

Announcements:

Sunday AM-PM:

Doug Jones

Wednesday

Barry Lehtinen

Song leaders:

Sunday AM

Paul Doyel

Sunday PM

Paul Doyel

Wednesday PM

Russ Jones

Foyer Personnel:

Sunday & Wednesday

James Hunt

Collection Counting

Paul Murphy / Jeff Day / Kyle Day

Wed. PM Devotional (11/6)

Casey Lehtinen



Sermons for Sunday

AM

The Opportunity of a Lifetime
Ephesians 1:1-2

PM

Contending for the Faith
Exposition of Jude



Listen to the Gospel!

Luis and Mike in the Mornings

(Monday - Friday) from 7:00 am - 9:00 am cst on
KnowTheTruthRadio.org

Biblical Foundations with Pat McIntosh

(Tuesday - Thursday) 7:00 am or 11:00 am
btradio.net



Our Records

Bible Class	120
AM Worship.....	213
PM Worship	165
Wednesday Bible Class 10/23.....	153
Contribution	\$5,633

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